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ABSTRACT

To better use library resources and simultaneously facilitate learning experiences for students having blocks of unscheduled time during the school day, a library-originated, directed-study course, "Explorations in Media," was instituted. The objective was to examine library materials as the means for conveying facts, ideas, and inspiration. Major objectives were to increase or inaugurate basic information skills, to acquaint students with strengths and limitations of available media, and to increase students' power of discriminating selection. Study units emphasized major areas of library materials and methods. (SK)

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SEE A NEED . . . AND FILL IT!

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The Problem

Devising imaginative, enticing, curriculum-oriented but **library originated** projects occupies a great deal of the secondary media specialist's time. Once an excellent collection of materials has been assembled, the optimum situation should be one in which all parts of this collection are in constant demand and use. How, after all, can teachers and students manage to overlook this richness of knowledge and mind-expanding prospects represented by these materials, especially when they have time to spend in the libraries? Quite easily is sometimes the answer to this query.

Students and teachers frequently miss maximum opportunities available by simply not being aware of them. For a more productive utilization of even a small multimedia collection, relying on previous methods of assignment preparation and leisure pursuits must be abandoned and updated to match the 'new' library services and materials.

Another factor in the problem of facilitating learning experiences is the ever-increasing number of students having blocks of unscheduled time during the school day: 'quest time,' 'resource time,' 'independent study time.' While on the face of it, this time is to be used beneficially — in actual practice a small amount of the time is spent doing homework with the remainder of it relatively wasted by many. Again, the waste is ofttimes unintentional, but simply another product of not being aware of alternatives. As more and more schools adopt flexible

Student listening to stereo tape programs on American history as part of his EXPLORATIONS IN MEDIA course.

Mrs. Christine is on leave from her regular position as Curriculum Associate, Library Services, Henry Gunn Senior High School, in Palo Alto, California. All pictures were taken of students in that facility. Mrs. Christine is a guest lecturer for the 1972-73 year with the Knapp School Library Manpower Project now in its second year at ASU.

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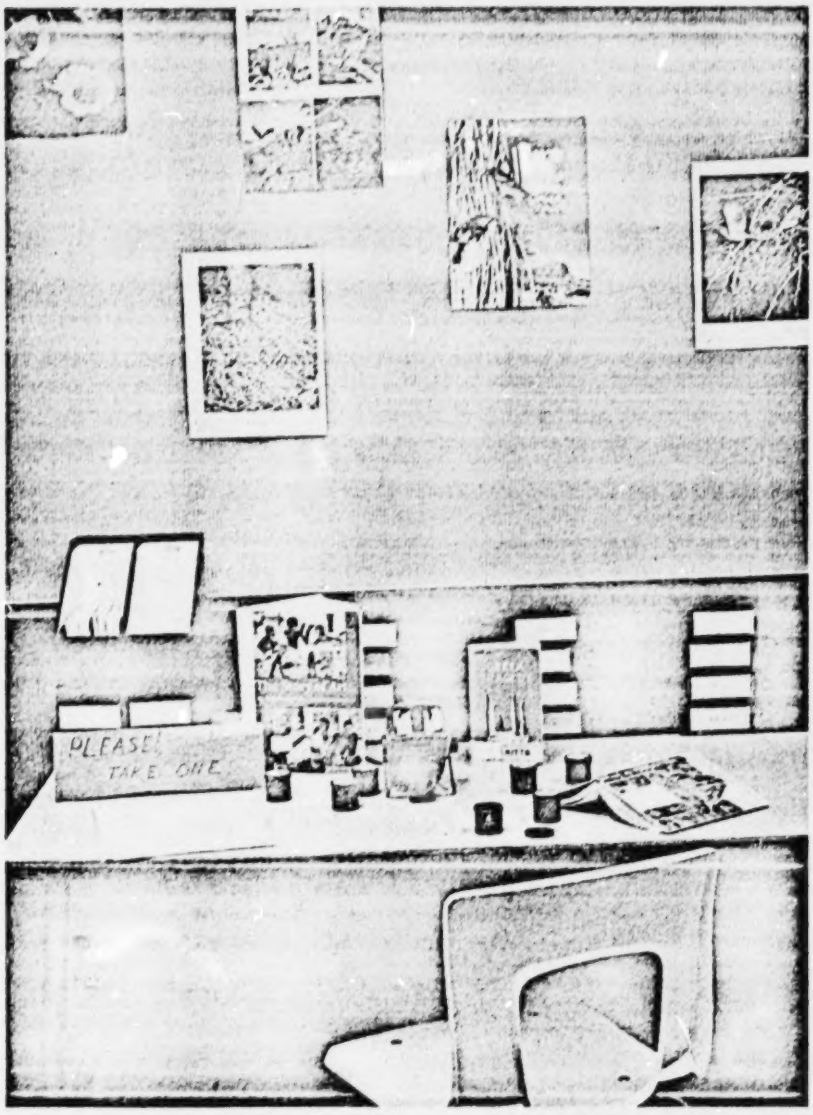

Partial unit set up with books and filmstrips on the subject of classical art and literature for an EXPLORATIONS IN MEDIA course.

schedules with this companion free-time aspect, the importance of students knowing about and being able to maximize the assorted available media becomes glaringly apparent. A directed study course, then, originating from the library, might be a part of the answer to assisting both the educational process and the students in a more discretionary use of their unstructured time.

A Solution?

With these considerations in mind, a fresh approach has been formulated into an elective course named EXPLORATIONS IN MEDIA. The purpose is to examine rather closely library materials available to high school students as the means of conveying facts, ideas, and inspiration in connection with school work and with life outside the school environment. Three major objectives are: (1) to inaugurate or to increase basic skills of information reporting both for present and for future utilization; (2) to acquaint students with the strengths and limitations of the various types of available media, as well as to inform them of their existence; and (3) to increase the students' power of discriminating selection.

Course Content

Study units emphasize the following areas of library materials and methods:

1. Reporting of information (bibliographic techniques)
2. Examination of periodicals
   - 2a. Magazines
   - 2b. Newspapers
3. Examination of reference books
   - 3a. General
   - 3b. Specialized
4. Examination of special materials
   - 4a. Filmstrips (silent)
   - 4b. Filmstrips (sound)
   - 4c. Films (8mm reel and cartridge)
   - 4d. Films (16mm)
   - 4e. Pictures
   - 4f. Phonograph records
   - 4g. Maps-Charts
   - 4h. Tape recordings
   - 4i. Pamphlets
   - 4j. Microforms

Unit I. — **A Manual for Writers,** by Kate Turabian, one of the most widely accepted bibliographic guides, is used for models and regulations concerning footnoting, bibliographic form, and other such concerns. Practice in the composition of short annotations is a part of this study skill unit.

Unit II. — Emphasis is on analysis of the many types of magazines and newspapers insofar as format, content, editorial style, objectivity, scope of coverage, and special features are concerned. Students are encouraged to focus most of their time on periodicals with which they are relatively unfamiliar.

Unit III. — It has long been felt that reference books of all types are grossly underused, even by well-meaning library students and teachers. In Unit III, the peculiar qualities of the major dictionaries, encyclopedias, yearbooks, almanacs, and other general reference books are noted. The amazing versatility of these standard works is more thoroughly appreciated after some concentrated examination. The depth of coverage afforded by specialized references in all fields is revealed after a large number of this type are studied.

Unit IV. — Special materials, encompassing the types found in most high school library media centers today, prove especially appealing to the students, representing as they do the world of sound and sight to which they are accustomed. When left only

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to the undirected user, however, machinery and unfamiliar materials seem to act as barriers to learning. The emphasis in Unit IV, then, is dual: familiarization with the hardware and investigation-understanding of the accompanying software of these commonly used multimedia sources. Examples of all such materials are looked at, listened to, or read, and a check-out on all machinery involved is a normal part of the unit.

Course Conduct

A student may elect to take EXPLORATIONS IN MEDIA, taught by the librarian, either as an independent study project for his own enlightenment, or as part of an assigned unit connected with a regular academic or non-academic course. The student's individual needs and purposes dictate the length of the course, as he may spend as much as one semester or as little as six weeks' time on his project. The marks of 'Pass' or 'No Credit' are assigned if the course is taken as an independent study course. If taken within the context of a regular class such as French IV, the grade is determined by the classroom teacher, with a summation statement from the librarian.

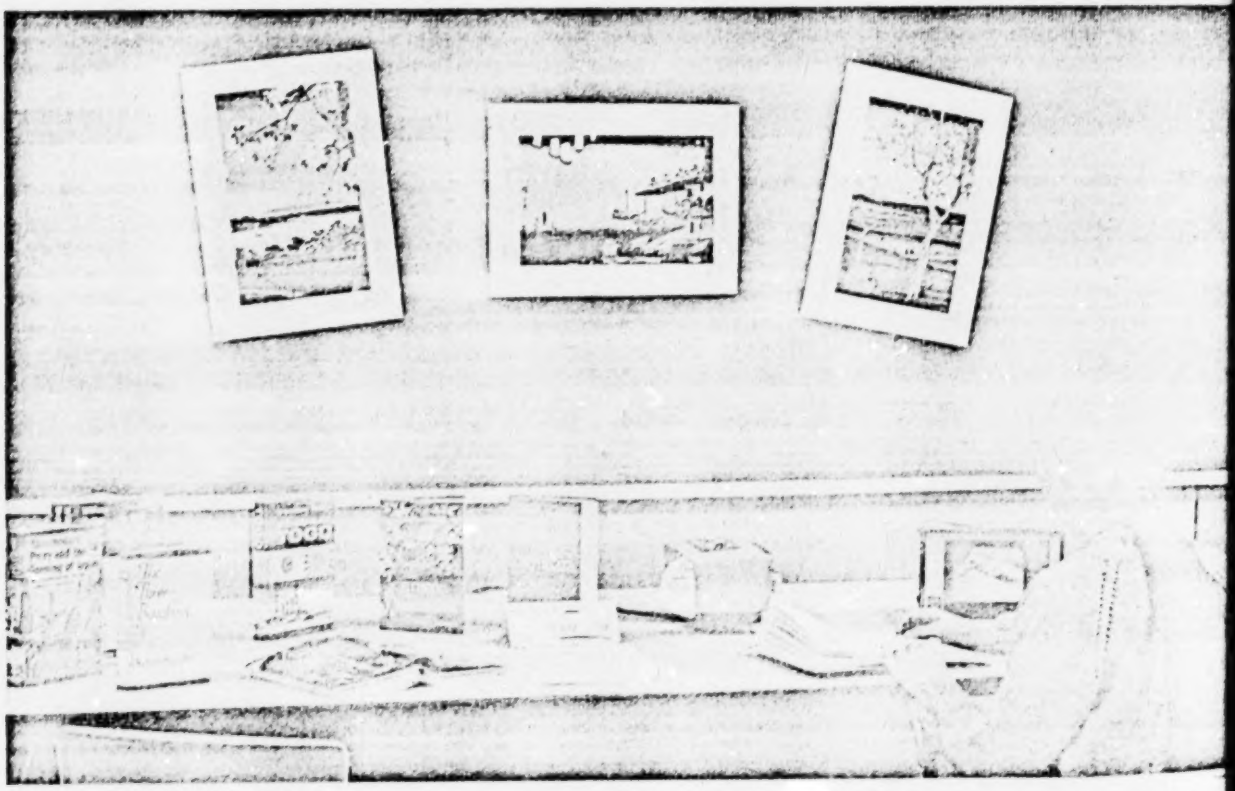
The methodology employed throughout EXPLORATIONS IN MEDIA is student investigation and discovery on a continuous progress basis after initial introduction, instruction, and demonstration by the library media specialist. Obviously, some areas are of more absorbing interest than others, with the resultant amount of time being spent in one unit longer than in another. That is completely acceptable. The only course requirement is an examination and reporting of a predetermined minimum number of **each** media-type to assure at least a nodding acquaintance with **all** media-types by the end of the course.

Course Uses

EXPLORATIONS IN MEDIA brought immediate endorsement from the high school curriculum committee. Teachers saw useful applications to their particular discipline, not the least of which was the value of having students involved in their own curriculum building one of their most persistent recurring demands? The possibili of using this elective as a mini-unit regular classes such as English Social Studies to develop proficien in discriminating among t numerous library materials in tho subject areas seemed especial appealing to teachers. Several othe expressed the desire to see the cour used as in-service training for facul instead of the rather catch-as-cat can type of library instructi librarians are too often forced to gi when a need dramatically develo

Expectations

It is to be hoped that after a f weeks spent in the main library a various library centers doing course work demanded by E PLORATIONS IN MEDIA, stude and teachers alike will be extracti more stimulating information a enjoyment from the multimed materials available than ever befo This will happen not because th are more or different sources, because they have been more fu initiated into their unique mysteri



Student viewing 8mm film cartridge on Japan, as part of an EXPLORATIONS IN MEDIA unit. Books and pictures on the s topic are also in evidence here.

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